

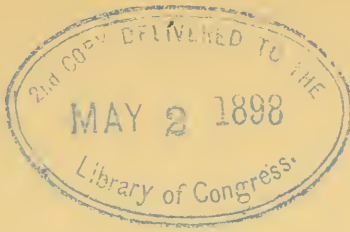
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THE EVOLUTION OF
A COLLEGE STUDENT
BY
WILLIAM DeWitt Hyde

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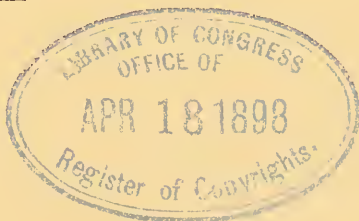


THE EVOLUTION

OF

THE COLLEGE STUDENT

BY
✓
WILLIAM DEWITT HYDE
17
PRESIDENT OF BOWDOIN COLLEGE



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THOMAS Y. CROWELL & COMPANY
BOSTON: 100 PURCHASE STREET

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PREFACE.

THE college student is a being of infinitely complex and swiftly shifting phases which external description is powerless to catch and reproduce. The only way to portray his deeper nature is to place him in intimate and confidential relations and let him "give himself away." This kinetoscopic picture is presented in the hope that it may assure over-anxious parents that not every aberration of their sons is either final or fatal: persuade critics of college administration that our problem is not so simple as they seem to think: and inspire the public with the conviction, cherished by every college officer, that college students, with all their faults and follies, are the best fellows in the world; and that notwithstanding much crude speculation about things human, and some honest scepticism concerning things divine, the great social institutions of family and industry and church and state may be safely intrusted to their true hearts and generous hands.

This sketch was drawn for the University Club of Buffalo in response to a request for something which would "show the graduate the inner life of the college of to-day." Under the title "His College Life," it was published in *Scribner's Magazine* for June, 1896, and it is through the kind courtesy of Charles Scribner's Sons that it appears in its present form.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE COLLEGE STUDENT.

FRESHMAN SORROWS.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *October 24, 1893.*

DEAR FATHER, — Your letter, with welcome check enclosed, is at hand. I note your advice to “wear the same sized hat, and keep sawing wood;” but really I didn’t need it; for the Sophs attend to the former, and the Profs provide for the latter.

No, I am not suffering from “swelled head ” yet. You know you wished me to keep up my music. Last week a notice was put up on the bulletin-board, inviting all candidates for the College Glee Club to appear at a certain room at nine o’clock Saturday evening. Among the candidates who came were two other Freshmen and myself. They told us that we must all put on dress suits, as personal appearance was a large element in fitness for the position. As I did not have any, they lent me one, or rather parts of two, waistcoat and trousers that were far too small, and a coat that was miles too big. Then they had us come in and make bows, and show how we would lead in a prima donna. Then they had us stand on our heels and sing low notes; stand on tiptoes and sing high notes; sing everything we knew,

from comic songs to the doxology in long metre; and finally, about half-past eleven, dismissed us with the statement that the other two were the better singers, but that my presence and personal appearance was greatly in my favor, and that the decision would be announced on the bulletin-board the next morning. We had not been out of the room two minutes before we realized that we had been awfully "taken in." I did not sleep much that night; and whenever I fell into a doze, the vision of that bulletin-board would dance before my eyes and wake me up. If ever I wished I was dead and buried, I did that night. It seemed as if I could never get up and go to breakfast, where they would all be talking about it, and walk into chapel with everybody knowing what a fool I had made of myself the night before. It made me wish I either had taken my dose of this sort of thing three years ago at a fitting school, or else had gone to one of the great universities, where a fellow is simply a unit in the vast whole, of whom nobody takes the slightest notice. But you always said that the small colleges have a great advantage over the large ones, in the fact that here the individual is made to be somebody, and take the consequences of his own action upon his own head. Well, I have made an ass of myself to begin with, and everybody knows it and is guying me about it. But I am getting used to it, and don't mind it as much as I did. I have had a good many calls by way of congratulation on my election to the Glee Club; and as these were the first calls of persons I had not had the privilege of knowing before, it seemed appropriate (and I was informed that it was an established college custom) that I should treat. I think that by taking the thing good-naturedly, and entertaining my

guests handsomely, I have made more friends than I have lost.

Your affectionate son,
CLARENCE MANSFIELD.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, November 6, 1893.

DEAR MOTHER, — You say you are “afraid I am homesick,” for I write all “about things at home and nothing about things here.” Well, I have been just a bit homesick; but I am getting bravely over it. This time I will try to tell you the things you want to know.

You needn't worry about my clothes; they are all right. I tore a three-cornered hole in my trousers the other day, but I fixed it up first-rate. I tried one of those fine needles to begin with, but it was no use. So I fished out a darning-needle, got some black linen thread, and went at it. I took the thread double and twisted, left a long end at the beginning, sewed it over and over, as you call it, taking stitches about a quarter of an inch apart, fetched back the end next to the needle to the long end I left at the beginning, and tied them together. Some Sophs made great fun of it; wanted to know if I was trying to demonstrate the *pons asinorum* on my trousers leg. That night I ripped up the whole seam, or whatever you call it, I had made, turned the trousers wrong side out, proceeded as before, except that I took stitches only half as big, tied the ends on the inside where they don't show, and the trousers look as good as ever.

You ask particularly about my religious life. I don't know what to say. The first morning I went to chapel some one, who seemed to be the usher, asked me if I would like to rent a sitting. I was fool enough to give

him a dollar for a seat ; and then he ushered me into a pew at one side near the front which is reserved for the Faculty. I tell you I didn't feel much like praying that morning.

The first really familiar and homelike thing I found when I came here was the Y. M. C. A. reception to the Freshmen. A large number of the students and several of the Faculty were present. There were a few addresses of an informal nature by the professors. Then we sang hymns, and refreshments were served. I got acquainted with three of the professors, one to whom I recite, and the whole affair went a long way toward making me feel at home here.

As for the meetings — well, I go to them regularly. I cannot say I altogether enjoy them. Some of the fellows have such wonderful experiences of grace that I don't know what to make of it. I never had anything of the kind. If that is essential to a man's being a Christian — why I simply am not in it. I can't conceive of myself as feeling like that. I don't see the sense of it. It doesn't seem natural. I want to do right. I know I do wrong. I know I need to be turned right about face once in so often, or else I should go straight down hill. And I am glad to spend an hour each week with fellows who are trying to get a brace in the same direction.

To tell the truth, I don't get much out of church here. The ministers are smart enough, and they roll out great glowing periods. But when they are through I cannot tell for the life of me what they have been driving at. You hear a lot about justification, sanctification, and atonement ; and then you hear a lot about Phrygia, Pamphylia, and Mesopotamia. Once in a while there

comes along a man who seems to understand us. He will throw out some practical and moral problem that we are grappling with; pile up the arguments in favor of the indulgence just as they pile up in our own minds; and then turn around, knock them all to splinters, and show how much more noble and manly it is to overcome temptation; and show us Christ as the great champion in the moral and spiritual warfare of the world.

It is a good deal harder to be a Christian here in college than it was at home, and the things that ought to be a help seem to be a hindrance. I expect to have rather a sorry time of it here for a while; but by far the greatest of my sorrows is that I have not been more faithfully,

Your dutiful and grateful boy,

CLARENCE MANSFIELD.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *May 30, 1894.*

MY DEAR HELEN, — I wonder if time flies as swiftly with you Willoughby College girls as with us? It seems but yesterday that we were gliding along together to the music of the merry sleigh-bells over the glistening snow. Of course you have your good times there. Your afternoon teas tendered by Sophomores to Freshmen; your debates in the gymnasium on municipal suffrage for women; your Halloween frolics; your basket-ball contests; your boat-races rowed for form only; your midnight lunches interrupted by "the Pestilence that walketh in darkness," — that nickname of yours for a meddlesome Prof beats the record, — are all very delightful as portrayed in your charming letters; but compared with foot-ball and base-ball, boxing and fencing, rushes and tugs-of-war, turkey suppers on the Faculty table

with any one of three parties the owner of the turkeys, the college authorities or the upper-classmen liable to swoop down on you at any moment and gobble up the feast, I must confess that your worst dissipation seems a little tame.

I have no doubt, however, that you make up in study what is lacking in sport. I haven't seen anybody here quite so completely carried away with Sophocles, or so in love with the Odes of Horace, or so fascinated with German syntax, as you seem to be. Your lamentations over spherical trigonometry, however, would evoke many a responsive moan. That was really credible from a college man's point of view; but if I were not so sure of your thorough genuineness and sincerity, I should set down those raptures about philologies and trilogies either to satire or to affectation. We men are not taken that way. I am glad you like them, though. To see a little gleam of sense, real or imaginary, through the interminable technical jargon a fellow has to grind out, must be a relief. I am heartily glad for you if the gods have granted you such a special dispensation.

I must confess, though, that I am beginning to get a real hold of Greek. Professor Bird has us read the whole of an author in translation; write essays on the times, characters, customs, and institutions; and then read in the original such passages as are specially significant in throwing light on the main characters and events. We get the life first in this way, and the letters afterward as the expression of that life. Then, too, he shows pictures of Greek architecture and art with the stereopticon in the evening; tells us the story of the statues of which we have casts in the Art Building, and of the coins and vases in the cases there. Life is inte-

resting in all its forms ; and it is slowly dawning upon me that these old fellows lived about the gayest, freest, loveliest life men ever lived on earth. But from the way Greek was ground out in the high school one would never have dreamed the old dry roots once had such sweet juice in them. And some of the other languages here are taught by young fellows fresh from German or German-American institutions, who regard the text, even of Horace or Goethe or Molière, as just so much grammatical straw to thrash the syntax out of. When I see what Greek is, and what the other languages and literatures might be, if only we had a man and not a thesis in cap and gown to teach them, it makes me mad. And yet you girls fall down and worship just that sort of a creature !!

Boys and girls make very different kinds of students. I think we get along better apart than together. You are docile, conscientious, and at least outwardly courteous. You eat whatever is set before you, asking no questions for consciences' sake. You study just as hard whether you like a subject or not. You do your best every time.

Now, that is very sweet and lovely. But I should think it would spoil your teachers to treat them that way. With us it is different. If we don't like a thing, we say so. As for these fellows that try to cram their old philology down our throats, we make their existence pretty uncomfortable. The other day the Latin tutor asked a fellow the gender of *ovum*, and he answered, "You can't tell until it's hatched." They won't teach us anything we want to know, and so we won't learn anything they want to teach. We keep asking the same old question over and over again, and make him explain

the simplest of all his favorite fine distinctions every time it occurs. Well, I must stop somewhere. I really did not know I was so interested in my studies, or had so many theories of education. You always understand me better than anybody else does. When I began this letter, I didn't think I cared much about these things anyway. But you are so in earnest about them that I believe I have caught the inspiration. I am a many-sided being; some sides are good and some are bad; some are wise and some are very foolish. You always bring out the best side; and for fear of deceiving you, and making you think I am better than I really am, I have to let you inside, and show you just how foolish and light-minded I am. If I always had you to talk to, I think I should be a very much more diligent student than I am. Not that I crave co-education. Oh, no! What Emerson says of friendship is especially true of the friendship of college boys and girls: "The condition which high friendship demands is ability to do without it. There must be very two before there can be very one. Let us buy our entrance to this guild by a long probation." I wish you would read the whole essay. I am immensely fond of it; and I always think of you when I read it. The two writers I love best are Carlyle and Emerson, although I don't profess to understand much of either of them. Carlyle braces me up when I am tempted to loaf and shirk; Emerson tones me down when I am tempted to pretence and insincerity. Both tend to make me more simple and true and real — more like what you are, and what I fondly fancy you would like to have me be.

Your faithful friend,

CLARENCE MANSFIELD.

SOPHOMORE CONCEITS.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, October 25, 1894.

DEAR FATHER, — Now that it is all over, I suppose I may as well tell you about it. Perhaps you saw in the *Herald* that we came near having a class rebellion here yesterday. We have a time-honored custom here known as the Nightgown Drill; the fellows put on their *robes de nuit* outside of their other garments, and with banners and transparencies reflecting upon the characteristics of unpopular men and measures, amid songs and shouts, parade the town. There is no harm in it, though I suppose that to the staid and dignified citizen it does not present a very edifying spectacle.

This time two or three of us ventured to wear, into Professor Bird's recitation-room the next morning, some vestiges of the attire which had done duty the previous evening. Professor Bird said that if we wished to make fools of ourselves on the public streets he, as an individual, had nothing to say about it; but that when it came to bringing such nonsense into his recitation-room he would not stand it, and we might leave the room at once.

Immediately after recitation the class held a rousing indignation meeting in Old College Hall, and passed the following resolutions: That "we, the members of the Class of 1897, most emphatically and indignantly protest against this act of tyranny and usurpation, and that we will attend no more college exercises until this wrong shall be redressed."

As I was one of the persons especially aggrieved I was made chairman of a committee of three, which was ap-

pointed to wait upon the president and present our resolutions.

He listened very respectfully to our representations. When we had finished he said that there seemed to be a hopeless division of opinion on the subject; the Faculty being firmly and finally committed to the position taken by Professor Bird, and the class being equally tenacious of the position taken in the resolutions. Accordingly, he proposed that we should refer the whole subject to a committee of three alumni, of whom the class should name one, the president should name one, and the two thus appointed should name the third.

The class, after some discussion, voted to accept the president's proposition; and we appointed as our representative on this committee a young graduate of the previous year who had been a leader in all manner of deviltry while he was in college, and is hanging around the college this year as a self-appointed coach of the foot-ball team until he can find something to do. We went back and reported that we had accepted his proposition, and named our referee. The president then gravely announced that he had selected *you* as his representative on the committee to which the matter should be referred; that he would telegraph for you at once; and that he should expect me and the others interested to appear before the committee in the precise apparel which had been the occasion of the controversy.

You can imagine that I was a good deal taken back. I did not relish having you called down here from your business, two hundred miles, to sit in judgment on that question. I thought I could anticipate the decision, and the manner in which it would be delivered. So I persuaded the class to drop the matter, and we have resumed attendance at recitations.

I give you the full account. This is all there is in it. The reporters got hold of it, and have written it up with a great deal of exaggeration and embellishment. So if you read my name or see my photograph in connection with the instigation of a great rebellion, don't be disturbed, and tell mother not to worry.

Your affectionate son,

CLARENCE.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *November 30, 1894.*

MY DEAR HELEN, — The foot-ball season is over, and I must tell you about it. As you know, we won the championship, and I happened to play quite an important part in it. The opposing team was made up of great giants from the farms; while our team were mostly light city boys, quick as lightning, and up to all the tricks and fine points. Their game was to mass themselves on one weak point in the line, and pound away at that time after time. In spite of all that we could do they would gain a few feet each time, and it looked as though they would win by steadily shoving us inch by inch down the field. When they had it almost over, we made a great brace and held them, and got the ball.

Then we made a long gain, bringing the ball within forty yards of their goal. The time was nearly up; and if we had lost it again, the game would have been either a tie or a defeat. As a last resort the signal was given for a goal from the field. The ball was passed to me. I had just time for a drop kick in the general direction of the goal, without an instant for taking aim, when their biggest man came down on me; and that was the last I can remember. As all my force had gone into the kick,

and I was standing still, and had almost lost my balance in the act of kicking, while he weighed seventy pounds more than I, and was coming at full speed, you can imagine that I went down with a good deal of force onto the frozen ground.

The next thing I knew I was in my room, and the doctor was working over me. To my first question, "Was it a goal?" the captain replied, "Yes, old man; you won the game for us." My injury proved to be nothing serious, and a few stitches in a scalp wound was all the medical treatment necessary. By the way, don't mention this part of the affair around home, where the folks will be likely to hear of it. They would worry, and that would do no good. I was at some loss how to charge up the doctor's bill on my cash account; but in view of the stitches, I charged it to "sewing." I am just having a glorious time of it this year. There are lots of foolish girls here, as there are everywhere, and I don't see why a fellow should not have some fun with them. My football prowess has opened the doors of all the best society to me, and I am lionized wherever I go. I can take my pick of the girls, and I get along with them first-rate. They talk foot-ball as soon as they are introduced, and that is a subject on which I feel perfectly at home. There are half a dozen on whom I have made a perfect mash; and perhaps I ought to confess that there is one in particular toward whom I am inclined to reciprocate. She is a little older than I (some of the fellows who are jealous of me call her the college widow), but with shrugging of her shoulders and elevating her eyes when one makes a particularly piquant remark, she is young enough in her manner. We led the dance the other evening; and it was great fun to see the fellows green with envy, and

the longing looks of more than one girl, whose eyes as much as said, "Oh, if I were only where that girl is."

I was considerably amused at the account you gave of your harmless serenade under the windows of the obstreperous Miss K——, but I was disgusted at the specimen of petticoat government that followed. How perfectly absurd to scold a set of such innocent and guileless creatures, who never entertained so much as a shadow of a naughty thought in all your lives.

Our dean wouldn't have made such a fuss over a little thing like that. Let me tell you what happened here the other night. We have an instructor whom we hate. I don't know just why. He is a wooden fellow. He tries to apply high-school methods of discipline and instruction to college men! Just think of it! We don't propose to stand it. So we "fixed" his recitation-room the other night, and among other things propped up the skeleton from the Medical School in his chair, and put between his teeth strips of paper on which the instructor's oft-recurring phrases were inscribed. I was in it. The dean got onto it, and I was summoned to his office. I expected I should catch it, and was making arrangements to leave town on an early train.

The dean, however, did not refer to the affair once. He said that he was afraid that I was not giving to my studies the undivided attention that they deserved, and asked what was the trouble? We talked over my plans and purposes in so far as I have any; and then he tried to show me how these studies in general, and the one which is taught in that room in particular, have a vital relation to my whole intellectual future. I never realized before how hard the college is trying, with very scanty resources, to provide for us a satisfactory course,

or how interested in our individual welfare the officers of it are. I came away with a very much better understanding of what I am here for. I had a very pleasant interview, and was almost glad to have had it; though after the tacit understanding to which we came, it would be fearfully embarrassing to have another based on a similar offence. I shall give the college no further trouble along that line, I assure you.

Now, was not this masculine mode of discipline better than yours? Women seem to read their Scriptures to the effect that without shedding of tears there shall be no remission of mischief. We men don't take much stock in tears. And such tear-provoking talk as seems to be so efficacious with you girls would run off from our toughened consciences like water off a duck's back.

Now, my dear Helen, if I seem to hold women in general, and women's ways of doing things, in somewhat light esteem, you know I regard you as a shining exception, and think whatever you do is perfect, and know you must have looked perfectly lovely even in those absurd and wasted tears.

Faithfully your friend,
CLARENCE MANSFIELD.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *April 8, 1895.*

DEAR MOTHER, — That is just like you, mother, "to look with more favor on my friendship for Helen than on my passion for Kate," or the "college widow," as you hatefully insist on calling her. You are a woman, and you can't see things as I do. Why, Kate just adores me; idolizes me; says that in all the history of the college there never was a fellow quite like me. Now, that is the sort of a girl for me. She makes me feel

satisfied with myself. And she *is* pretty and fascinating.

As for Helen, what do you think she had the impertinence to write to me. I had written her a nice letter, in which, to be sure, I made one or two slighting and patronizing references to women in general and petticoat government for colleges in particular, and this is what I got.

YOU HORRID, CONCEITED THING, — No, I thank you. If you cannot respect my sex, and speak respectfully of my college, please pay no more of your silly compliments to a “shining exception.”

P. S. If in addition to the fact of feminine foolishness, of which you are so well assured, you wish to continue your studies into the philosophy of the phenomenon, and in spite of her being a woman will for once consult the world’s greatest novelist (perhaps you can bring yourself to it, in view of her masculine pseudonym), you are most respectfully referred to a remark of Mrs. Poyser on the subject.

Now, you surely don’t suppose a college Sophomore is going to stand such talk as that. The remark referred to is, “I’m not denyin’ that women are foolish; God Almighty made ’em to match the men.”

I have had enough of Helen. What a fellow wants of a girl is some one to reflect with a halo of sympathy and admiration his own views and opinions. He doesn’t want to be stirred up and set to thinking. Now, you know I want to please you in everything. But in these matters you must admit that I am a more competent judge of what suits me than anybody else can be for me. I always respected Helen, and do still; but for real solid happiness all to ourselves, give me Kate every time. So don’t worry, mother. It will all come out right in the end, and you will come to see these things as I do.

As for the Y. M. C. A. and that sort of thing which you inquire about, to tell the truth, I haven't been much lately. Between foot-ball and society my time has been pretty well taken up. I believe in having a good time, and letting everybody else have the same; I believe in father's version of the Golden Rule, which is, you know, "Do to others as you think they would do to you if they had a chance." I don't see why we should try to cast our lives in the narrow and contracted grooves marked out for us in primitive times, when the world was just emerging from barbarism.

I recognize, of course, that life, like every game, has its rules, which you must obey if you want to get any fun out of it. But it strikes me that for the rules of life you must go to the men who have studied life from its first beginnings in plant and animal, up to its latest development in the modern man. Mill and Spencer, Huxley and Tyndall, ought to be better authorities on the rules of this game than the ingenious priests who relieved the monotony of exile by drawing up an ideal code and attributing it to Moses; men on whose minds the first principles of the synthetic philosophy had never dawned, and who had no more conception of the conditions which evolution has brought about in our day than the man in the moon.

Now, I mean to do my best, as soon as I get time, to find out what the rules of life are according to the most approved modern authorities, and then to play the game of life as I do the game of foot-ball, fair and hard. I shall never cheat, never shirk, never be afraid. There's my creed up to date. If there are any other rules delivered by competent authority, and accepted by all players of good standing, I shall obey them too.

So don't be anxious about my religious condition. If you don't like my creed, my practice is all right. I haven't done anything I would be ashamed to have you know, except a little foolishness that doesn't amount to anything, and isn't worth mentioning. And as long as I honestly try to do as you would have me, I can't go far astray.

Your affectionate

CLARENCE.

JUNIOR MISGIVINGS.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *October 14, 1895.*

DEAR MOTHER, — Well, you were right, after all. My affair with Kate is off, and my only regret is that it was ever on. She is a sweet creature, and I am sorry to have caused her pain. But she is light-hearted, and she will soon get over it. She was in love with being in love; in love with the good times I gave her; never in love with me. We never really cared for the same things. That whirl of gayety she likes to live in would be fearfully sickening to me if I had to have it long. We were not happy together unless we had somewhere to go to, or some excitement or other on hand. She will not long remain inconsolable.

Of course I shall come in for a liberal amount of criticism at the sewing-circles and afternoon teas and the women's club. I know I have done wrong, but I didn't mean to. And really it isn't as bad as it looks. We never were engaged, though people may have thought we were. That I have made the biggest kind of a fool of myself, I must of course acknowledge.

One thing is sure. I shall have nothing more to do with young ladies. I am going to give my entire at-

tention to my studies. The great economic and social questions that are pressing for solution demand the undivided attention of every serious man. I am coming to feel more and more as though my mission in life might lie in that direction. Once in the thick of the fight for economic justice and social equality, I shall have little time to think of private domestic happiness. I shall never marry. All petty personal pleasures must be cast aside as cumbersome impediments by one who will serve the cause of the poor and the oppressed. You, dear mother, will be henceforth my only feminine confidant and counsellor.

As for those religious matters which seem to be your main concern, I am afraid I can't give you much satisfaction. I have discovered that the rules of the great game of life are not so simple as I at first supposed. I see at last what you mean by your doctrine of self-sacrifice. In base-ball we often have to make what we call a sacrifice hit, which brings in another runner while the batter himself gets put out. Then, too, the question sometimes comes up whether to try for a very hard ball, and take ten chances to one of making an error and spoiling your individual record, or only pretend to try, and miss it, and so save your individual record at the expense perhaps of losing the game. Essentially the same principle comes out in all our games. In hare and hounds the hares run over the most difficult and devious course they can find, dropping pieces of paper behind them at intervals for scent. Then the hounds come after them on this trail. All goes well as long as the trail is clear and the scent is good. Then we come to a point where all scent stops. Then the lazy shirks sit down and wait, while the energetic fellows strike out in

all directions, until one of them finds the trail. He shouts to the others, and they all follow him. Now, this willingness to strike out and help find the trail for the rest, instead of sitting down and resting and letting some one else do it, is, I suppose what you mean by self-sacrifice. Now, I accept all that. But it seems to me that the sacrifices demanded in real life are not stereotyped, cut-and-dried forms of traditional self-denial. Life is just like the game. Society is all the time being brought up short at places where it is impossible to tell which of several possible courses it is best to pursue. Then we need men who are not afraid to strike out and find a way, where no sure way appears. Then we need men who have the courage to make necessary mistakes.

Now, this willingness to take on one's self the risks and responsibilities of leadership in matters which are still uncertain, seems to me to be the very essence of the heroism modern society requires. If there is any type of men I hate, it is the stupid, timid conservatives who stand still or turn back whenever they come to a novel problem or a hard place, and then boast that they never go astray. Of course they don't. But, on the other hand, they never help anybody to find the way; they are not leaders.

Now, I gladly admit that Jesus taught the world once for all the great lesson of this self-devotion of the individual to the service of society. While others had anticipated special aspects and applications of this principle, he made it central and supreme. In doing so he became the Lord and Master of all who are willing to become humble servants of their fellow-men. I acknowledge him as my Lord and Master; and that, too, in a

much profounder sense than I ever supposed the words could mean. I do not, however, find much of this, which I regard as the essence of Christ's teaching and spirit, either in traditional theology or conventional Christianity. Orthodox theology seems to have been built up around the idea of saving the merely individual soul, while Christ's prime concern was to show men how to lose that selfish sort of soul.

In short, I propose to tackle the most pressing problem of the present day, — that of the just distribution of the products of human toil ; and I propose to give my time and talents, and to throw away my wealth and position, for the sake of contributing what I can to its solution. That is what, as I conceive it, Jesus would do were he in my place to-day. Now, if leaving all and following Jesus is Christianity, I am and mean to be a Christian ; but if you insist on the ecclesiastical definition of the term, then I am not a Christian, and probably never shall be. Whatever I am, I shall always be,

Your obedient and devoted son,

CLARENCE MANSFIELD.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *January 26, 1896.*

DEAR NELLIE, — So you have made up your mind to go into a college settlement. Well, I congratulate you. Still, I don't quite like it. To be sure, it is a good thing in itself, but it doesn't seem to me that it is the best thing for you. If I had the disposition of your fate, I think I could find something better than that for you. With your gentle, sensitive nature, it has always seemed to me that you were better fitted to make some one man happy and some one home sweet and beautiful, than to go into the wholesale benevolent

business. However, I ought not to find fault, for I am thinking seriously of doing something very much like that myself. Instead of trying to relieve here and there a few cases of misery and degradation, as promiscuous charity tries to do; and instead of trying to elevate the tone of this, that, and the other plague-spot in the social system, as the settlement does, — I mean to strike at the root of the whole evil, and try to remove the causes of which all these notorious evils you refer to are the corollaries and effects.

In other words, I intend to devote my life to the cause of labor, and to the prosecution of such reforms as may be necessary to secure for labor its just share of the wealth which it produces.

I will not weary you with a lengthy account of all the details of my programme. In fact, they are not very clear in my own mind yet.

I have expected to find myself a lonely and rejected social outcast in consequence of the adoption of these views, and devotion to this work. But knowing that you feel the evils of the existing order as keenly as I do, and are to devote your life to binding up the wounds they cause, as I am to devote mine to finding a substitute for the cruel competition which does the cutting, I feel renewed comfort and confidence and courage in my undertaking. Assured of your sympathy and appreciation, I shall not mind what the rest of the world may say. Even if we do not see each other often, our work will be in common for the same great ends. And while I am struggling to secure for the bread-winner a larger portion of the product of his toil, you will be teaching the wife and daughters how to make better use of their increased earnings.

I may as well confess that I had begun to cherish the hope of a closer union; but it seems that the call for renunciation of private happiness has come to us both alike, and I suppose we must be content to lose all thought of individual happiness in the consciousness of devotion to a common cause. I cannot tell you how great a support even this connection with you is to me. It is so much so that I am sometimes afraid it is the desire to be in sympathy with you, quite as much as my own consecration to the cause, that has led me to renounce my opportunity for worldly success, and enlist in this crusade in behalf of the poor and the oppressed. Still, I shall endeavor to serve the cause for its own sake, for I know no other motive for it would find favor in your eyes.

In the earnest hope that I may be found worthy to be your humble co-worker in this glorious cause, I am

Most sincerely yours,

CLARENCE MANSFIELD.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *February 22, 1896.*

DEAR FATHER, — Your question as to what I am going to do when I get through college has set me to thinking. The more I think, the less I am able to answer it. The fact is, I am all stirred up and unsettled. College has raised a thousand questions, and thus far seems to have answered none. I am as much, yes, rather more, of a Christian than when I came here; but the creed which I accepted then as a matter of course, now bristles with interrogation points, to say the least, on every side. So that the ministry is out of the question, even if I were adapted to it. I am not a book-worm, and so I stand no show for teaching. I am not

a good debater; I should never do for law. For medicine I have not the slightest taste. I am afraid I never shall be good for anything.

Business seems to be the only opening; and yet I don't like to take that as a last resort. One ought to feel drawn toward that, if he is going into it, and not be driven to it like a slave.

Besides, I am beginning to question whether there is any chance for an honest man in business nowadays. I have been reading a good deal of socialistic literature lately; and I am not sure that they may not be right, and the rest of us all wrong. It doesn't seem quite the fair thing that I should be here living in idleness and comparative luxury, with a practical certainty of a competence all my days whether I do any work or not; while millions of my fellow-men are toiling for the bare necessities of a miserable subsistence.

I can't see why, just because grandfather happened to settle, when the town was a wilderness, on a farm which included the whole mill-privileges of the present city, — I really can't see why we should be practically levying an assessment on every poor weaver with a big family of children, and every hard-worked woman with aged parents to support, that works in our mills or lives in our tenements.

Then your joining the trust last year was the last straw on the breaking back of my lingering faith in the present industrial system. If a trust isn't robbery with both hands, forcing down the wages of the laborer, and putting up the price of goods to the consumer, I should like to know what is? Has not the thing a trust aims to accomplish been forbidden by law ever since English law began to be framed? Have not the legislatures of

half our States passed enactments against it? Is it not denounced on the platform and in the press as the most glaring injustice and iniquity of the present generation?

I know that you are scrupulously honest and upright, and that you would not do anything unless you were first convinced of its justice. But I have come to look at these things in the light of abstract principles; and in that light they stand before my mind convicted of injustice, and condemned to be superseded by more equitable arrangements. Just what that better order is to be, I am not sure. Perhaps I am in the condition of a socialistic speaker I went to hear the other night, who in reply to a demand from the audience for a definite statement of his proposed remedies, replied, "We don't know what we want, but we want it right away, and we want it bad." Well, I must confess that these notions of mine have not been very clearly thought out.

In the mean time I am unsettled, dissatisfied, miserable. And when I try to answer your question about my future work, I am made more conscious than ever of my wretched intellectual condition. So you must have patience with my heresies and my uncertainties; and perhaps matters will clear up a little before the time for the final decision comes.

Your affectionate son,

CLARENCE MANSFIELD.

SENIOR PROSPECTS.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *January 23, 1897.*

DEAR FATHER, — I have at last made up my mind what I shall do after graduation, and make haste to tell you first of all. I am going into the mills with you. I

shall make manufacturing my business; and what time I can spare from business I shall give to politics.

A good stiff course of political economy for the past year and a half has entirely knocked out of me those crude notions about the inherent wickedness of capital, the tyranny of ability, and the sole and exclusive claim of labor to divide among its own hands the entire joint product of the three great agencies. What you told me, too, about your running at a loss during these hard times, has thrown a new light on the matter. I fully appreciate the force of your remark that the problem of industry is not how to divide the spoils, but how to distribute responsibility. I have also gotten over my horror of the trust. I recognize that the increased efficiency of machinery, the cheapening of transportation, the swift transmission of intelligence, the factory system, the massing of population in cities, the concentration of capital in large corporations with extensive plants and enormous fixed charges, the competition of all relatively imperishable and transportable products in one vast world-market, have radically changed the conditions of production, and made old-fashioned small scale production, and free competition between petty competitors, impossible. No, father; I don't think you are a robber-baron because you have joined the trust. I begin to realize the tremendous pressure a corporation is under when it must pay interest, keep up repairs, and meet fixed charges, and can come much nearer meeting these obligations by producing at a loss, than by not producing at all. I see that the cutting of prices below cost by old concerns trying to get out of speculative complications, and by new concerns eager to get a footing in the market, makes effective combination an absolute ne-

cessity. I see that the trust is simply an effective way of doing what was ineffectively attempted by informal agreements as to trade customs, listings, quotations, and schedules of prices, written agreements limiting output and fixing prices, the appointment of common agents to market the product, and the like. I accept the trust as the stage of economic evolution which the world is now compelled to enter.

So much for business. Now, as to politics. You say that if I am going into business I had better let politics alone. I can't agree with you. What you say about the difficulties, discouragements, and disadvantages of meddling with politics I know to be true. But I am not going into it for what I can get out of it, but for what I can put into it. You may be right in saying that I shall find it impossible in the cold, hard world of fact to make all my fine ideals real. Well, if I can't make the ideal real, I can at least do something toward making the real a little more ideal.

Through a corrupt civil service, honeycombed with sinecures and loaded with incompetence; through valuable franchises, given away, or sold for a song, or bought by bribery; through the sacrifice of efficient municipal administration to the supposed exigencies of national politics; through discriminating legislation, wasteful expenditure, and unnecessary taxation; through the universal failure to find a satisfactory method of dealing with the liquor problem, — the poor man is squeezed and gouged and plundered by idle office-holders and fat contractors and favored corporations and sleek saloon-keepers and bribe-taking bosses and unrighteous rings.

I am going into politics to fight these concrete evils. I am not going to try to do the workingman's work for

him. I don't believe he really wants anybody to do that. And I am sure that it would be the worst thing that could happen to him, if he did. But I am going to try to give him a chance to do his work under fair conditions ; and make it impossible for pensioners or politicians, directly or indirectly, to take a penny of his hard earnings from him without giving him a penny's worth of commodities or services in return. And as for trusts and corporations which derive their existence and protection from the State, I propose to do my utmost to enforce on them publicity, and the responsibility that goes therewith. I would have their books open to the best expert accountants the State could employ ; and I would have some way of finding out how much of the vast saving in production these enormous aggregations of capital undoubtedly effect goes to the proprietors, and how much goes to the community.

There, father, you have my programme : through business to earn an honest living for myself, and through politics to help every other man to a fair chance to do the same.

In these ways, my views on the relations of capital and labor have undergone a pretty radical change. I could not tell you the whole story in a letter. But suffice it to say, while I still believe that there are grave defects in the existing industrial system, and believe that there are many ways in which it might be improved, I see that such improvement must be a long, slow process of evolution, in which one defect after another must gradually be sloughed off. I see that such a desire to improve the system, and gradually to substitute better features in place of those which now exist, is not inconsistent with one's working, practically under the system

as it is. Indeed, I am convinced that the desired improvement must come, not through agitators, who seek to apply abstract principles from without, but through manufacturers and merchants, who understand the present system in its practical internal workings, and are thus able to develop the new out of the old. I believe that my proper place as a reformer is inside, not outside, of the industrial system that is to be reformed.

That is the extent of the socialism there is left in me. At the same time I feel that the strong dose of socialism I have taken during the past year or more has done me good. Unless I had been through this stage of striving to set all things right, I am afraid I should have settled down into the conventional ruts of the mere business man, who is content to make his own little pile in his own way, leaving society to take care of its own affairs. I am glad that my choice of business coincides with your long-cherished wishes; and I hope that you will see that my political purposes are not altogether destitute of justice and sound sense.

Your affectionate son,

CLARENCE MANSFIELD.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *March 2, 1897.*

DEAR MOTHER, — You already know, from my letter to father, my final decision about a profession. I am glad it pleases him, and my only regret is that it may not be equally acceptable to you. I know you hoped I should be a minister, or at least a doctor or lawyer. I recognize the many attractive things about all these professions; but I do not believe I was cut out for either of them. If you will pardon once more an illustration from your chief abomination, the foot-ball

field, I can show you how I feel about it. Business and politics seem to me like being actually in the game, playing it for all you are worth. The lawyer strikes me as a sort of umpire, to declare and apply the rules in case of fraud or foul play, or the member of the athletic committee who conducts the diplomacy. The doctor strikes me as the fellow who stands along the side lines, ready to bind up the bruised heads and broken limbs. The journalist is the man who takes notes and writes it up afterward. The minister seems like the man who sits on the grand stand, and explains the fine plays and errors to the ladies. My heart would not be in any of these things; and consequently I should not do either of them well. The studies of the last part of the course, now that they are elective, and one carries them far enough to really get into them, sift men out for the right professions, without their knowing when or how it happens.

The fellows that take to biology, that are handy with the microtome and the microscope, go on into medicine as a matter of course. The fellows that get waked up in philosophy, and take the problems of the universe upon their shoulders, naturally go into the ministry. The men that take to history and political science are foreordained to law. Now, while I have been interested in three or four lines, my only genuine enthusiasm has been economics. Industry and commerce seem to me the basis on which everything else rests. I think that I can do more good as a business man and an active force in politics, with a successful business behind me, than in any other way. The business man and the politician seem to me to be dealing with the real things, while the professional men seem to be dealing only with the symbols of things.

A man's vocation ought to be the expression of his ideal. My ideal is to be an effective member of the social order that now is, and an efficient promoter of the better social order that is to be.

You complain that I do not say much about religion nowadays. As I have told you often, religion is not to my mind an external form superimposed upon life from without, but is the informing spirit of life itself. In striving to do with my might the thing my fellow-men need most to have done for them, I feel that I am at the same time doing what is most acceptable to God, and most conformable to the teaching and example of Jesus Christ.

At the same time I have gotten over that antipathy to religious institutions which I have had for a year or two. I have gone back to the Christian Association here in college; and whether the change is in them or in me I don't know, but I find myself able both to do good and to get good in their meetings. In fact, unless there were some such meeting-ground for the expression and cultivation of our ideals, I don't see how they could be kept from fading out. It is a great help to feel that in spite of the diversity of taste, talent, and vocation, so many earnest fellows are going out into the world as sincere servants of the one God, followers of the one Lord, and workers in the one Spirit.

I shall also connect myself actively with the Church. I do not profess to have solved all the problems of theology; and fortunately our Church does not require of laymen like me subscription to an elaborate creed. I see that the cry, "Back to Jesus," in religion, is as foolish as the cry "Back to Phidias" in art, or "Back to Homer" in poetry. We cannot go back to primitive

simplicity and *naïveté* in any department of life. The subsequent development is part and parcel of our spiritual inheritance, of which it is impossible to divest ourselves. The Church, as the organized, institutional expression of the life of the Spirit of God in the heart of humanity, I accept as a spiritual necessity. And I should no more think of trying to serve God and my fellow-men apart from it, than I should think of shouldering my individual musket and marching across the fields on my own private account to defend my country against an invading army. Christian kindness, Christian justice, Christian civilization, Christian culture, the Christian family, and above all a Christian mother like you, I believe in and love with all my heart. And now that the Church has come to represent to my mind, symbolically at least, all these most precious and beneficent influences that have entered into the structure of my character and life, I cannot do less than freely give my influence and support to the institution from which, indirectly if not directly, I have freely received so much.

So, my dear mother, if you will look beneath the outward form to the underlying spirit, I hope you will see that after all I am a good deal of a Christian; and mean to be in my own way something of a minister too.

Your affectionate son,

CLARENCE MANSFIELD.

BRADFORD COLLEGE, *June 15, 1897.*

DEAREST NELL, — You shouldn't complain that my letters for the past six weeks have been all about you, and nothing about myself. How can a fellow help it, when you have made him the happiest being in the

world? Still, if you command, I must obey; and begin the story of my poor self where I left off. Let's see. Where was it? It seems so long ago and so far away that I can scarce recall it.

"How soon a smile of God can change the world!"

Oh! I remember. The agreement was that you were to quit the *rôle* of St. Catherine, and condescend to enter a home instead of a settlement; and I was to abjure the vows of a St. Christopher to right at once all the wrongs of the universe by my own right arm, before entertaining the "thought of tender happiness." We were two precious fools, weren't we? Yet it was a divine folly after all. Goethe is right in his doctrine of renunciation. If we had not faced fairly the giving up of all this bliss, it would not be half so sweet to us now. And please don't tell me I have "smashed at one blow all your long-cherished ideals of social service." It is not so. The substance of all those social aims of yours is as precious to us both as it ever was; and we will find ways to work them out together. Not one jot or tittle of the loftiest standard you ever set before yourself shall be suffered to pass away unfulfilled. Your aims and aspirations are not lost, but transformed, *aufgehoben*, as the Germans say of the chemical constituents of the soil when they are taken up to form the living tissue of plant or animal.

There is nothing you ever thought of doing in a settlement that we will not do better in our home. We shall not give less to the world, because we are more ourselves. We shall not be less able to comfort those who sorrow, because our own hearts overflow with joy. Because we are rich in each other, we shall not be less generous to all. You shall have all the classes and schools, and

clubs and meetings you wish; and they will not be the least bit less successful for being in the home of a mill-owner in our native city of fifty thousand people, instead of in some neglected quarter of a city ten times as big.

Do you know, father is so delighted with what he calls the "recovery of my reason," that he has promised to build a house for us this fall. We will work up the plans together this summer. One feature of it, though, I have fixed on already, which I know you will approve. Our library will be a long room, with a big fireplace on one side and a cosey den at each end, marked off by an arch supported by pillars. These dens we will fit up with our college books and furniture, and make them just as nearly like our college rooms as we can. And then, in the long winter evenings, we will come out of our dens before the fireplace; and you will be my private tutor, and with your patient tuition I shall perhaps get some good after all out of the Horace and Goethe and Shelley and Browning, which you understand and love so well; but which, to tell the truth, I haven't got much out of thus far. Somehow we fellows don't get hold of those things as you do.

Isn't it glorious that my examinations come so that I can get off for your class day and commencement. To be sure, I shall probably forget the fine points in political economy and sociology, in which I have been working for honors the past two years. But then, honors or no honors, I have got the good out of them anyway; and what are honors at the end of college compared with love at the beginning of life?

I am delighted that you are coming to my commencement. My part is a dry, heavy thing, which I don't expect to make interesting to anybody else; but it is in-

tensely interesting to me, for it sums up the inner experience which I have been going through these past four years, and has helped to give me my bearings as I go out into life. My subject is "Naturalness, Selfishness, Self-sacrifice, and Self-realization." You who have known me as no one else has all these years, you will see what it all means. You catch the idea.

First: We set out as nature has formed and tradition has fashioned us, innocent, susceptible, frail. The hard, cruel world comes down upon us, and would crush us under its heavy unintelligible weight.

Second: We rise up against it; defy tradition, and throw convention to the winds. We in turn strive to trample others under foot. But though we wear spiked shoes, we find the pricks we kick against harder and sharper than our spikes.

Third: We surrender, abjectly and unconditionally; cast spear and shield away in the extreme of formal, abstract self-denial, and ascetic, egotistical self-sacrifice. This in turn betrays its hollowness and emptiness and uselessness and unreality.

Fourth: The Lord of life, against whom we've been blindly fighting all the while, lifts us up in his strong arms; sets us about the concrete duties of our station; arms us with the strength of definite human duties, and cheers us with the warmth of individual human love; and sends us forth to the social service which to hearts thus fortified is perfect freedom and perennial delight.

Such a process of spiritual transformation I take to be the true significance of a college course. To be sure, in college, as in the great world of which it is a part, none see the meaning of the earlier phases until they reach the later; and consequently many never see any

sense in it at all. For the great majority of men go through college, as the great majority of them go through life, without getting beyond the first or second stage, and graduate, as Matthew Arnold says most men die, "Unfreed, having seen nothing, still unblest."

There, Nell, haven't I been as egoistic this time as your altruistic highness could desire?

Your devoted lover,

CLARENCE MANSFIELD.



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